

Psalm 115

- Psalm 115 is another of the Hallel or Hallelujah Psalms, it ends with that phrase “Hallelujah” or “praise the Lord.”
 - This is one of the Psalms sung by Jesus with the disciples there in the upper room prior to going to the Garden of Gethsemane.
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V: 1 There is something within man, in our flesh, some more than others, that desires admiration and glory. This can be a strong pull in a person's life, a great motivator.

- Just look at sports stars, or entertainers, and in some cases pastors.
- As Christian men and women, we don't want glory for ourselves, but for the Lord.

[John the Baptist declared in absolute agreement with the Psalmist:](#)

John 3:30 “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

- This sentiment is the essence of true ministry.

Psalm 29:1-2 “¹Give unto the LORD, O you mighty ones, give unto the LORD glory and strength. ²Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.”

- We need to be careful to rightly direct the glory to our Lord, not to ourselves, and not to other lesser things.

Isaiah 42:8 “I am the LORD, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images.”

[The Apostle Paul tells us:](#)

Galatians 6:14 “But God forbid that I should boast / glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

[We're told:](#)

1 Corinthians 1:29 “That no flesh should glory in His presence.”

- He is worthy of all honor, glory, and adoration!

Revelation 4:11 “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: For You created all things, and for Your pleasure they exist and were created.”

“Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but to Your name give glory, ... Because of Your mercy, because of Your truth.”

- Because of His mercy, which endures forever. One of God’s prime characteristics, and His truth - He is truth, Jesus is truth.

John 1:17 “For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”

V: 2 Gentiles / heathen / non-believers. A common accusation or taunt of those who mock God. Something bad happens and they say something like “So where is your God now?!”

Exodus 5:2 “And Pharaoh said, “Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go.”

- Pharaoh got his answer, and the skeptic described in this Psalm gets his answer in V: 3.

V: 3 Answer: “**Our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.**” He is sovereign, and He doesn’t answer to us!

Deuteronomy 32:39 “See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with Me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand.”

Isaiah 46:9-10 “⁹Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, ¹⁰declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.”

“Where is their God?”

- The answer is always the same “right there on the throne where He belongs, high and lifted up!”
- We don’t and won’t understand why God allows some things: we don’t have to explain all His ways to His critics.

Isaiah 55:8-9 “⁸For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord. ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

V: 4 “Their” idols, their gods, speaking of the Gentiles / heathens / non-believers.

- Gentiles (H-1471) “goyim” - nations, Gentiles, heathens - referring to non-believers, literally to non-Jews.
- The comparison: Our God is in heaven, high and lifted up. Their gods are definitely lower, down on earth, and they are just the work of men’s hands.
- Silver and gold are things that men value, but in heaven it’s what they pave the streets with.
- There are different words in Hebrew that are translated “idols” in English. Whatever word that is used, it always appears in the plural form - I believe because there are so many idols in this world.

[The word that is used in our text this morning is the Hebrew word:](#)

- Idols: (H-6091) “Asab” - to form or to fashion, highlighting the fact that they are made by human hands.
- Another word not used in this passage, translated as “idols” helps get the idea across:

Psalm 96:5 “For all the gods of the peoples are idols.” (Worthless, useless)

- “Idols” - (H-457) “liyl” it’s a noun, but it functions as an adjective; meaning “worthless” or “useless.”

[The prophet Isaiah comments on the subject:](#)

Isaiah 44:9-10 “⁹Those who make an image, all of them are useless, and their precious things shall not profit; they are their own witness; they neither see nor know, that they may be ashamed. ¹⁰Who would form a god or mold an image that profits him nothing?”

- Isaiah goes on to describe the blacksmith who fashions his idol with a hammer and the strength of his arms, but ends up hungry and weak because his idol can’t help him.
- He describes the man who cuts down a tree. Part of it he uses for a fire, part of it he kindles a fire to make bread, and part of it he carves into an idol so he can bow down and worship it, and prays - but the man had total control over it from the cutting down, burning it or carving it - sadly it’s really a god made in his own image to which he is bowing down
- As our passage describes: “*The work of men’s hands.*”
- I’ve talked with a number of atheists who at times have mocked my God and I’ve come to certain realizations about them in general.

- Atheist or Atheism is a compound Greek word “A-theist” “A” meaning no, and “theos” meaning God which when put together to means “no-God.” This is different than being an “agnostic” - which again is a compound Greek word. Prefix “a” meaning “no” - “gnosko” which means to “know” which when combined means “don’t know” - and when someone doesn’t know, they’re “ignorant.”
- I think that “agnostic” is a much better term, all kidding aside, they really just don’t know the True and the Living God.
- Another reason why I think “agnostic” is a better term is because there is no such thing as a true “atheist.”
- All so called atheists worship something, what they really saying is that they don’t believe in the God of the Bible, the God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob - but they do surely worship the lesser gods of this world, including themselves and their overinflated perspective of their puny intellect.

1 Corinthians 3:19 “For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, “He catches the wise in their own craftiness.” (They’re so smart, they’ve outsmarted themselves!)

- For most so called atheists their issue isn’t the existence of God, it’s the character of God. God did or didn’t do something that they didn’t like or agree with, they were disappointed by God in some respect and out of anger like a petulant child they have turned away from him and declare “I don’t believe in You!”
- You see their anger and contempt and wonder why they would get so angry at someone or something that they claim doesn’t exist.
- But like I said, there really aren’t any true atheists because everyone of them worships something, very often they worship themselves.
- Back in the days described in God’s Word, the people who worshipped the false gods of the day seemed to be more overt in their worship, they built great temples and so on. We do the same thing today we just call them by different names, but they are still worshipped none the less.
 - Molech = god of pleasure, entertainment, sports, the god of jet skis, big trucks, giant screen TV’s.
 - Witchcraft, pharmachia: drugs.
 - Baal = god of intellectual prowess “philo-sophia”, the love of knowledge.
 - Astureth = goddess of fertility / sexuality people magazine, Hollywood.
 - Mammon = god of power / possessions / wealth.
 - Pan = god of fields, forests, wild animals.
 - Bachus = alcohol, party & revelry.

- Humanism = worship ourselves.
- What does all of this mean to us? Mostly to guard against it, to make sure it's not creeping into our lives - to make sure that we are worshipping the True and the Living God, and not some false god of this world. (God = Master passion)

V: 5-7 Gives us the post-mortem: Just like in Star-Trek: "She's dead Jim..."

- Isn't this description consistent with a dead body or person? A mouth, but can't talk, eyes, but can't see and so on.
- The general description is of someone or some thing that is in-sensate, unable to do or sense anything. Helpless in every way, and as such not helpful in any way.
- A pretty accurate description of the lesser gods of this world.

V: 8 Conclusion: Those who make these idols are like them - dead, useless.

- Those who trust in them, put their faith in them - dead and disappointed.

On the contrary:

Isaiah 40:31 "But those who wait on the Lord (trusting in Him) shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

- Dead men don't renew their strength, they don't run, or walk, they don't soar like eagles!
- They're alive! They've got feet, and there is life in them, so they are used to walk and to run.
- Unlike those dead and useless idols, they have mouths - and will proclaim the glory of the Lord.
- They have eyes - and will see the power of God, they will see the truth of God.
- They have ears - and will hear His voice.
- And noses, and hands that both sense and serve.
- Most importantly: just as those who both formed and worshipped useless idols became like them - they became dead and useless.
- So too those who worship the True and the Living God become more and more like Him!

1 John 3:1-2 “¹Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ²Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

2 Corinthians 3:18 “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

- The more time we spend with Him, the more we become like Him -sadly the same is true for those who spend time with their worthless idols.

V: 9-11 Exhortation: Trust in the Lord!

- Speaking to Israel: those governed by God.
- Speaking to Aaron: those who serve the Lord.
- Speaking to those who fear the Lord: Those who tremble at His Word and walk rightly before Him.
- The response is the same each time: “*He is their help and their shield.*”

Psalm 46:1 “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

Psalm 91:4 “He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler.”

V: 12-13 “*The Lord has been mindful of us...*”

- We are ever on the forefront of His mind, we are the apple of His eye.

Zechariah 2:8 “... for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye.”

Psalm 34:15 “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.”

- The Lord is always watching over us, He is ever mindful of us.

“*He will bless...*” 4X’s - Because He is a blessing God! He loves to bless His children.

Psalm 33:12 “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people He has chosen as His own inheritance.”

- Who will He bless? “Us” those called by His name, those who are governed by Him, those who serve Him, and those who fear Him - roll all that together, those who have a personal relationship with Him.

Psalm 128:1 “Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways.”

V: 14-15 The Psalmist simply pronounces a blessing upon the reader.

- There is no real need to comment on that, just to receive it.

V: 16 God created the heaven’s and the earth, He’s kept the heaven’s for Himself, but He’s given dominion of the earth to men.

- Sadly, man - Adam who had dominion over the earth gave that dominion to Satan, by submitting to Satan’s counsel, thus now Satan has dominion in a limited way, I say limited because the power of the Holy Spirit is restraining him, otherwise we’d all be toast.

That is why Jesus refers to Satan as the prince / ruler of this world:

John 12:31 “Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler / prince of this world will be cast out.”

V: 17 The dead don’t praise the LORD, nor those who go down to silence - I suppose that this means that now is the time to praise the Lord!

V: 18 To bless the Lord means to ascribe all glory, and honor, and praise to Him.

Psalm 34:1 “I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.”

Psalm 100:4 “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.”

Psalm 103:1 “Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!”

Psalm 134:2 “Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.”

- That is exactly what we will do, we will bless the Lord from this time forward, and forevermore!

Hallelujah!
Praise the Lord!